

# **Captain John M. Godown collection**

## **S2496**

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This finding aid was produced using the Archivists' Toolkit

September 14, 2016

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Rare Books and Manuscripts  
140 North Senate Avenue  
Indianapolis, Indiana, 46204  
317-232-3671

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository</b>	Rare Books and Manuscripts
<b>Creator</b>	Godown, John M., 1833-1911
<b>Title</b>	Captain John M. Godown collection
<b>Date</b>	1861-1864
<b>Extent</b>	0.01 Cubic feet 1 folder
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Text [Folder]</b>	S2496

### Preferred Citation

Captain John M. Godown collection, Rare Books and Manuscripts, Indiana State Library

## Biographical Note

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John McPherson Godown was born in Pennsylvania about 1835. John lived in Fort Wayne when he enlisted in the 12th Indiana Volunteer Infantry, which organized on May 5, 1861. Beginning as a 2nd Lieutenant in Company F, John transferred to Company K as a 1st Lieutenant by August 17, 1862. He served in this capacity throughout the rest of the Civil War, and was discharged on June 8, 1865. In 1870, John married Frances "Fanny" Fairbank in Lowell, Massachusetts. The best man at their wedding was General Lawton from Fort Wayne. The 1880 federal census lists the family living in Indianapolis with their children: Mary D., age 12; Lottie P., age 8; and Katie F., age 6; as well as Johnson Godown, age 80; and Meriam Fairbank, age 70. The census recorded John was 45 years old and Fanny was 35. The census taker misspelled the last name, writing "Godonn" instead of Godown.

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## Scope and Contents

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This collection has two items, a field notebook from 1862-1864, and a reprinted letter from the *Old Fort News*. The letter was written by John M. Godown to Fannie Fairbank, whom he would later marry. The letter was written on Christmas eve from Camp Antietam, Maryland. He wrote: "...as yet we have been exposed to no danger, the Rebels have not yet crossed the Potomac, into Maryland, and in fact have made no attempt to do so." John told about dropping his gold pen, point downward, so it was totally ruined. In explaining his living arrangements, he wrote: "We are doing very well here; we have most excellent quarters, with a very fair quality of rations and not any too much to do, whilst with many others it is quite the reverse." John told Fannie that he and Capt. Nelson were invited to Christmas dinner at the home of "a kind old Maryland gentleman."

The field notebook measures 4 x 6 1/2" and is bound in brown leather. There are sketches of battlefields and positions of soldiers. He listed the men in Pioneer Company, 4th Division, 15th A.C. (Artillery Company), dated December 31, 1863, in Scottsboro, Alabama. There is a drawing with dimensions for a bridge. He kept an accounting of finances under the heading: Allen Hamilton and Company On September 19, 1863, he listed 18 names under the heading: Carpenters detailed.

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## Arrangement

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This collection is arranged chronologically.

## Administrative Information

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### Publication Information

Rare Books and Manuscripts

### Conditions Governing Access

This collection is open for research.

### Conditions Governing Use

Legal title, copyright, and literary rights reside with Rare Books and Manuscripts, Indiana State Library, Indianapolis, IN. All requests to publish or quote from manuscripts must be submitted to Rare Books and Manuscripts.

### Custodial History

This collection was received by Rare Books and Manuscripts as a records donation from Kay Batista in 1965/6.

### Accruals

No further additions are expected.

### Processing Information

Collection processing and finding aid completed 2016/8/11 by Nikki Stoddard Schofield.

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## Related Materials

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### Related Archival Material

Materials relating to this collection may be found in the following collections in Rare Books and Manuscripts, Indiana State Library, Indianapolis, IN:

L098: John M. Godown collection, 1861-1951

## Controlled Access Headings

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### Corporate Name(s)

- United States. Army. Indiana Infantry Regiment, 12th (1861-1865).

### Geographic Name(s)

- United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Personal narratives